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### Dedication: Ruth H. Brunson

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## DEDICATION

### RUTH H. BRUNSON

A legal journal can be only as good as the law library which supports it and it is in this spirit that this issue of the UALR Law Journal is dedicated to Ruth Brunson, Professor of Law, Attorney, and Law Librarian, on the occasion of her retirement.

Ruth Brunson grew up at Prescott, Arkansas. She was married to the late John Brunson, a well-known attorney. Her association with legal education began when he was attending law school at Fayetteville and she worked as secretary to Robert A. Leflar. Later, she got her own law degree and was admitted to the bar. Much of John Brunson's law career was spent in military service and, consequently, they spent considerable time outside Arkansas, both in the Washington, D.C. area and overseas. John Brunson was still in military service when he died. Ruth returned to Arkansas and worked in state government under former Governor Orval Faubus and for the Arkansas Supreme Court.

From this point on, the story of Ruth Brunson is, in a sense, the story of legal education in Little Rock. Although there had been a University of Arkansas law school in Little Rock during the early part of the century, it had severed formal ties with the University around 1915 and had continued to serve central Arkansas for many years as the Arkansas Law School. Legal education under University sponsorship was re-established in 1965 when this school opened as the Little Rock Division of the University of Arkansas School of Law under the leadership of Dean Ralph C. Barnhart. The library presented a real challenge. The law libraries of the law school and Pulaski County were to be combined. Thus a "lawyer's librarian" was needed and the search began.

At this time Ruth was working for Justice Ward of the Arkansas Supreme Court and it was only when the librarian originally hired was unable to accept that Ruth could be persuaded to leave Judge Ward and become our librarian. The law school was then located on the top floor of the Gay Building at 300 Broadway, just a few blocks from our present location. Ruth's enthusiasm in setting up the library is legend. Apocryphal tales still survive of her having been seen moving books in a wheelbarrow. This enthusiasm had not dampened when, in the winter of 1973, the school moved to its present location and she seemed to be everywhere at once trying to get the library in place with a minimum

of inconvenience to the faculty and the bar.

Professor Brunson is the only person who has been continually associated with the school since it opened as the Little Rock Division in 1965. During the 21 years which followed she was a part of many important events. In 1975, the school separated from the School of Law at Fayetteville and became a part of UALR, thus requiring separate accreditation. Those of us who were on the faculty at that time can well remember the struggle to prepare the extensive self-study documents needed and can well remember Ruth's contributions. About this time, it was recognized that those who had received their legal education in Little Rock were in need of an alumni organization and the UALR Law Alumni Association was formed. Professor Brunson served as its first president. The Association continues to serve graduates of the UALR School of Law, the Arkansas Law School and those who remain of the original University of Arkansas law graduates. Also at this time, her various friends, colleagues, and admirers established the John Brunson Memorial Award fund in memory of her late husband. Today it continues to pay substantial awards for outstanding service to this Law Journal.

Notwithstanding all her important contributions to legal education, Ruth is perhaps most admired for her lesser known kindnesses to individuals. Ruth was the person who helped many new faculty members to get settled in Little Rock. She was the person to whom faculty and students could always go with their problems and who was always supportive. Indeed, it was not always necessary to go to her: she would often just show up at the time she was needed. She has always been an inspiration especially to women students. In the early days, there were only a few. Today they account for about half the student body. One woman student recently said of Ruth "She was the one who paved the way for us all!"

After having endured two moves of the law school, first into its original facilities then into its present location, Ruth will be able to take her well earned retirement as the school struggles through its anticipated move to new facilities in just a few years. Wherever the law school may be located in the coming years, its library will always be identified with Ruth Brunson. As one student said, "She is an institution!"

*James W. Spears*  
Professor of Law